

# Elmer Budd's Wild Firefest Roundup

We hope everybody likes it!



Wednesday  
May 10

THE DAILY NEWSLETTER OF THE 2000 NATIONAL FLOOD CONFERENCE



## Flood Risks in Texas Changeable as the Weather

José Montemayor, Commissioner of Insurance for the State of Texas, welcomed attendees to the second day of the 2000 National National Flood Conference .

Montemayor described several of the devastating hurricanes and floods that hit Texas in the last century. He noted that residents in poor border towns often are uninsured and local governments sometimes cannot provide enough disaster assistance to qualify for matching grants from other sources.

“No catastrophe is ever the same, no two communities are ever alike, and whatever works for one city may not work for another,” he concluded.

## Report From Mitigation

Michael Armstrong, Associate Director of FEMA’s Mitigation Directorate, next reported on a number of the initiatives being undertaken by his staff.

“We are doing an internal review of compliance,” he said, explaining that communities that fail to adopt and enforce strong building codes will be put on a faster track for probation and suspension from the NFIP. “At the same time, we’ll work harder with the CRS communities to get them higher ratings and make sure that we are mentoring them effectively.”

Armstrong described the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program which already has bought out more than 20,000 flood-prone properties. This land is being restored to wetlands to create a buffer between storms and developed properties. In addition, he talked about *Project Impact*, FEMA’s

initiative to create disaster-resistant communities; the modernization of flood maps; and the Mitigation Directorate’s HAZUS methodology that is being applied to flood hazard prediction and resource management.



“Our role at FEMA is to help you in the private sector and you at the State and local level to understand your risk and live with it rather than try to control it,” Armstrong stated. “We can’t control Mother Nature but we can affect human nature.”

## Internet Interfacing

Ed Pasterick, Director of the Financial Division of the Federal Insurance Administration, next led conferees through the steps that would be needed to write a flood policy online.



He was followed by a technology panel discussion moderated by Rita Hollada, chair of the Flood Insurance Producers National Committee. Audience members were polled about their perceptions of the Internet. Panelists shared their perspectives as polling results were displayed on video screens surrounding the stage.



### TODAY'S HIGHLIGHTS

General Session  
8:30 - 10:00 a.m.

Technical/Educational Workshops 42-48  
10:15 - 11:30 a.m.

Closing Luncheon  
11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.



## NFIP Program Awards Dinner

Almost 600 people attended the conference's Awards Banquet last night. Fourteen NFIP partners were honored for activities they'd undertaken during the last fiscal year—October 1, 1998 through September 30, 1999—going the extra mile to make this program as successful and responsive as it is today.

### Public Awareness Materials Contest

Each year, WYO companies and other NFIP partners submit the public awareness materials they've developed about flooding to be voted on by conference participants. Of the 192 items entered in this year's contest, the winners in each category were: The Seibels Bruce Group, Inc., for Best Printed Marketing Material and for Best Training Material, Omaha Property and Casualty Insurance Company for Best Web Site, and United Surety and Indemnity Company for Best Advertising Material.

### Agency of the Year Awards



This award is given to three insurance agencies that have displayed innovative marketing strategies, increased their flood portfolios, and actively promoted flood insurance awareness.

This year's winners were AAA Insurance Agency, Gismondi Insurance Associates, and Heli Miller Insurance.

### Administrator's Club and Trophy Awards

Within each of five size categories, WYO companies that achieve the highest percentage of growth for the previous Arrangement Year qualify for the Administrator's Club. The company that experiences the highest percentage of overall growth and more than 2,000 new policies for the 1998-99 Arrangement Year is awarded the Administrator's Club trophy. WYO companies receiving Administrator's Club awards this year were The Hartford Fire Insurance Company, First Community Insurance Company, Auto Club South Insurance Company, IGF Insurance Company, and Fidelity and Deposit Group. This year's trophy winner was IGF Insurance, with 3,100 new policies written during the 1998-99 Arrangement Year (an increase of 97.8%).

### Administrator's Quill Award

This award recognizes the highest percentage of overall growth among large WYO companies. The winner is determined by the increase in the number of the company's new flood insurance policies minus the

number of rewritten policies. The Administrator's Quill Award was given this year to The Hartford Fire Insurance Company with 17,161 new policies.

### Donald L. Collins Award

This award is presented each year to an NFIP partner who has created strong connections between the Program and its stakeholders. Dave Minier, Director of Government Services for VISA U.S.A., Inc., was this year's award recipient. VISA entered into an agreement with FEMA at the beginning of 1999 to promote the use of VISA credit cards for buying NFIP flood insurance. For every policy purchased with a VISA card from January until the end of December 1999, VISA donated \$.25 to the two *Project Impact* communities of the year, with a minimum donation of \$15,000 to each community.



### Roy T. Short Memorial Award

This award is given by the National Lenders Insurance Council (NLIC) to honor innovative and inspiring people who have rendered the best service to lenders attempting to comply with Federal regulations while protecting investors and consumers from flood losses.



This year, the NLIC gave this award to Lena Thompson, Lender Compliance Officer for the Federal Insurance Administration, in recognition of her work to

improve communication between the NFIP's public and private stakeholders.

## Around the Edges

Major Bridget Bunnick (U.S. Marine Corps, Ret.) was the first-place winner of the 5K Run and 1-mile Fun Walk sponsored by the National Lenders Insurance Council and the Salvation Army to raise money for local disaster relief efforts. Dean Ownby (NFIP Bureau and Statistical Agent) placed second in the 5K Run. More than 60 runners and almost 80 walkers took part in the Tuesday morning event.



Electronic Data Systems (EDS) ensured that conferees started the day well fed by providing a delicious breakfast buffet. Insurance Management Systems Group (IMSG) and Lionel Henderson & Co., Inc., sponsored a reception prior to the Program Awards dinner.